

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
COLUMBIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Tuesday, May 21, 2019 – 7 pm
Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room
323 Route 87, Columbia, CT**

Members Present: First Selectman, Steven M. Everett; Deputy Selectman, Robert Hellstrom; Selectman, Lisa Napolitano; Selectman, William O'Brien; Selectman, Jeffrey Viens.

Also Present: Town Administrator, Mark Walter.

CALL TO ORDER: S. Everett called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** S. Everett added 9.4, Sustainable CT to the Agenda. S. Everett MOVED to Approve the Agenda as revised for May 21, 2019. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
 - 3.1 **Approval of BOS Regular Meeting Minutes for May 7, 2019.** J. Viens MOVED to Approve the BOS Regular Meeting Minutes for May 7, 2019. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
4. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** None.
5. **OLD BUSINESS:** None.
6. **NEW BUSINESS:** None.
7. **COLUMBIA LAKE / DAM / BEACH:** None.
8. **APPOINTMENTS / RESIGNATIONS:** None.
9. **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:**
 - 9.1 **Memorial Day Observance.** M. Walter shared information on the Memorial Day Observance program that will be held on May 27th at 9:00 in Yeomans Hall. The ceremony will be held in the hall and then will proceed to the green to lay the wreath and the raising and lowering of the flag. The program will continue to all three cemeteries.
 - 9.2 **CRCOG Services Summary.** M. Walter shared the Capital Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) summary services that include municipal services, policy development and planning, public safety and homeland security, and transportation planning. He encouraged the BOS to go the website <https://crcog.org/> for further information.
 - 9.3 **Public Hearing on Zoning Fee Ordinance Scheduled for June 4, 2019.** M. Walter shared the recommendation from Planning and Zoning on changes in the Zoning Fee's. J. Viens asked about the language in the ordinance pertaining to prohibited uses; in particular "To further assist in the interpretation of permitted uses, certain uses are listed as prohibited in

a district even though the listing of uses prohibited is not intended to be exhaustive; any use not specified as permitted in the district is prohibited.” M. Walter stated he will check on the language in the ordinance and report back to the BOS.

- 9.4 Sustainable CT Committee Meeting on May 22, 2019.** M. Walter stated that we will be hosting a Sustainable CT kickoff meeting to the town committees and board chairs on May 22nd in Yeomans Hall. We will have two guest speakers; Lynn Stoddard, Director of Sustainable CT, Institute of Sustainable Energy, ECSU and Kait Hershey, Representative from the Town of Hebron’s Green Team.

10. CORRESPONDENCE:

- 10.1** Email Thanking George Murphy and Brian Paul on the Columbia Baseball Fields.
- 10.2** Article in *The Chronicle* regarding “Columbia to vote on budget plan.”
- 10.3** Article in *The Chronicle* regarding “Columbia budget is easily approved.”
- 10.4** Article in *The Chronicle* regarding “Forum takes stance against legal pot.”

11. BUDGET:

- 11.1 Transfers:** S. Everett MOVED to Approve the Transfers of \$5,700.00 to the noted accounts. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

TRANSFER #/AMOUNT	FROM A/C# DESCRIPTION	TO A/C# DESCRIPITON
2019-038 / \$500.00	10-4132-500 / Professional/Tech	10-4132-770 / Transportation
2019-039 / \$200.00	10-4133-710 / Professional Improvement	10-4133-300 / Supplies
2019-040 / \$300.00	10-4260-710 / Professional Improvement	10-4260-300 / Supplies
2019-041 / \$1,000.00	10-4260-230 / Electricity	10-4260-240 / Fuel
2019-042 / \$300.00	10-4570-110 / Postage	10-4570-300 / Supplies
2019-043 / \$3,300.00	10-4112-040 / Group Insurance	10-4320-500 / Professional/Tech
2019-044 / \$100.00	104260-230 / Electricity	10-4260-515 / Contracted Services

- 11.2 Refunds:** None.

- 12. APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS:** S. Everett MOVED to Approve the Payment of Bills totaling \$142,465.07 to the payment of bills to 2018-2019 Emergency, 2018-2019 Regular, Credit Card, and Paychex. MOTIONS CARRIED 5.0.

- 13. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:** W. O’Brien stated that AHM is hosting a strategic planning process for the Columbia focus group for youth services on June 3, 2019 from 6:00 to 7:00 pm in Yeomans Hall and extended the invitation to the BOS. L. Napolitano shared information for a class on organic land care for town properties if anyone would be interested. L. Napolitano has contacted a CT DEEP Forester to come and meet with her on Thursday, May 23rd to discuss forest health and extended

the invitation to anyone who would like to attend. J. Viens asked if a letter can be drafted from the BOS to Tim Ackert and Cathy Osten regarding the BOS's opposition to the proposed State tolls and the funding of teacher's pensions. Discussion ensued. S. Everett stated that if J. Viens would like to draft the letter and whoever wants to sign it can sign it.

- 14. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Real estate per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(D); Pending Litigation per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B); Personnel per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(A). 1.** S. Everett MOVED to enter into Executive Session at 7:27 pm for personnel matters with M. Walter present. MOTION CARRIED 5.0. S. Everett MOVED to end the Executive Session at 7:38 pm.
- 14.1 Town Administrator Contract.** S. Everett MOVED to Approve the renewal of Mark Walter, Town Administrator's employment contract. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
- 15. ADJOURNMENT:** S. Everett MOVED to ADJOURN the meeting at 7:40 pm. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully Submitted by Jennifer C. LaVoie

**REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
COLUMBIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Tuesday, May 7, 2019 – 7 pm
Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room
323 Route 87, Columbia, CT**

Members Present: First Selectman, Steven M. Everett; Deputy Selectman, Robert Hellstrom; Selectman, Lisa Napolitano; Selectman, Jeffrey Viens; Selectman, William O'Brien

Also Present: Town Administrator, Mark Walter.

CALL TO ORDER: S. Everett called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** S. Everett MOVED to Approve the Agenda with the following changes: Under New Business Add 5.4 New Business IT Security Assessment. MOTION CARRIED 4.0.

W. O'Brien arrived at 7:03 pm.
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
 - 3.1 **Approval of BOS Regular Meeting Minutes for April 16, 2019.** R. Hellstrom MOVED to Approve the Minutes for April 16, 2019. MOTION CARRIED 4.0.
4. **OLD BUSINESS:** None.
5. **NEW BUSINESS:**
 - 5.1 **FOIA - Request to Redact Residential Address.** M. Walter provided an updated form for the FOIA Act, Request to Redact Residential Address to the BOS. M. Walter explained that General Statutes 1-217 (c) (2) provides residents that fall under a specific category the ability to make a request to have their residential address protected from disclosure.
 - 5.2 **Tax Collector Suspense List.** M. Walter explained that the accounts listed on the suspense list are removed from consideration as assets for the Town of Columbia. This keeps the collectible reporting as accurate as possible. These taxes are not abated, and we do collect accounts on the suspense list each year.
 - 5.3 **Waive Requirement for Bid Process Regarding Refinishing Tennis & Basketball Court.** M. Walter explained we only had 2 bids to repair the basketball and tennis courts because there are only 2 companies in our area that perform this type of work. M. Walter requested that the BOS waive the requirement for 3 bids to refinish the tennis and basketball courts. M. Walter stated that the recommendation to handle both projects is Constantine Paving & Sealing for a total of \$32, 298.00. S. Everett explained that there have been discussions on how to use the Brand money to refurbish or repair both courts and in order to continue to move forward on these projects for Rec Park we will be using the previously designated funds for the new pavilion at Rec Park. The Brand money will be used to build the new pavilion. S. Everett MOVED to Authorize resurfacing the

tennis courts with previously designated funds for the pavilion to fix the tennis court. MOTION CARRIED 5.0. S. Everett MOVED to Approve previously designated funds from the pavilion for the basketball court. MOTION CARRIED 5.0. S. Everett MOVED to Authorize the Town of Columbia to enter into a contract with Constantine Paving & Sealing for both the basketball court and the tennis court for \$32, 298.00. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

- 5.4 **IT Security Audit:** M. Walter explained he attended training at CIRMA and found that Municipalities are one of the highest targets for cyber-attacks. Novus Insight will be able to perform an assessment of the Town's IT security and will specifically look into the separation of duties for employees, payroll, and accounting systems. After the assessment, Novus will provide employee training. M. Walter explained that the school has already started the project with Novus. M. Walter is recommending that we enter into a contract with Novus Insight to provide the IT Security Audit. He stated that we can transfer funds from contingency to cover the costs. S. Everett MOVED to Authorize Town Administrator, Mark Walter to enter into a contract with Novus Insight for IT security assessment on the Town of Columbia. S. Everett amended the MOTION. S. Everett MOVED to Authorize Town Administrator, Mark Walter to enter into a contract with Novus Insight for IT security assessment on the Town of Columbia at a cost of \$13, 850.00. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
6. **COLUMBIA LAKE / DAM / BEACH:**
- 6.1 **Application for Permit to Install a Raft at 166 Rte. 87 for Mr. & Mrs. Eric Sodergren.** S. Everett MOVED to Allow the Sodergrens to put in a new raft in the designated position recommended by LMAC. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
7. **APPOINTMENTS / RESIGNATIONS:** S. Everett stated that Joanne Prague Doyle gave her resignation from the Board of Education. J. Viens MOVED to Accept Joanne Prague Doyle's Resignation. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
8. **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:** M. Walter provided an overview on several key issues at a recent CCM meeting that included tolls and teacher's retirement. CCM is emphasizing that if the State is looking to shift the funding of teacher's retirement to the towns, that the State considers modifications to the MBR calculations, revise burden of proof on special education, cap teacher's retirement services, and adding another tier to the Connecticut Municipal Employees Retirement System (CMERS). M. Walter explained that several towns and cities are putting together resolutions stating that they are against the funding of the teacher's retirement and the BOS should look at putting together their own resolution to send to the State. J. Viens stated he would like to put a resolution together.

M. Walter updated the BOS on a question asked about the circulation of *The Chronicle*. He explained the circulation on the chronicle 428 home, 1200 free papers, 70 web accounts

9. CORRESPONDENCE:

9.1 Letter to the State of CT Office of the Secretary of State Regarding the “List of Office to be Filled.” S. Everett explained that the Town Clerk sends the State of CT Office of the Secretary of State Regarding the List of Offices to be filled.

9.2 Article in *The Chronicle* Regarding FiPAC Public Hearing on 4/24/19.

10. BUDGET:

10.1 Transfers: S. Everett MOVED to Authorize Transfers to the departments listed on the attached paperwork.

TRANSFER #/AMOUNT	FROM A/C# DESCRIPTION	TO A/C# DESCRIPTION
2019 #028 / \$250.00	10-4112-030 / Workers Comp	10-4112-240 / Fuel
2019 #029 / \$25.00	10-4132-300 / Supplies	10-4132-110 / Postage
2019 #030 / \$ 400.00	10-4410-120 / Telephone	10-4410-300 / Supplies
2019 #031 / \$100.00	10-4410-120 / Telephone	10-4410-710 / Professional Development
2019 #032 / \$400.00	10-4420-500 / Prof/Tech	10-4420-300 / Supplies
2019 #033 / \$200.00	10-4670-140 / Advertising	10-4670-770 / Transportation
2019 #034 / \$600.00	10-4260-230 / Electricity	10-4260-240 / Fuel
2019 #035 / \$7,142.00	10-4112-040 / Group Insurance	10-4112-022 / Unemployment Comp
2019 #036 / \$6,205.00	10-4800-900 / Contingency	10-4410-610 / Bldgs/Grounds Rep/Maint
2019 #037 / \$13,850.00	10-4800-900 / Contingency	10-4113-500 / Prof/Tech

MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

10.2 Refunds: S. Everett MOVED to Authorize the refunds of \$728.65 to the 5 recipients attached.

AMOUNT	FROM	TO
\$106.86	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	Toyota Lease Trust
\$412.87	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	Toyota Lease Trust
\$120.81	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	Toyota Lease Trust
\$14.64	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	Leo R. Desautels
\$73.47	TOWN OF COLUMBIA	WH Rose HP Fairfield LLC

MOTION CARRIED 5.0.

11. **APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS:** L. Napolitano asked if we could do an analysis comparing 2018 and 2019 for electrical bills. M. Walter stated he will get that information. S. Everett MOVED to Authorize the payment of bills consisting of 18/19 Emergency, 18/19 Regular, Credit Card, and Paychex totaling \$141,367.36 on the stated attachments. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
12. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** A. Dunnack asked if the tennis courts would be repaired or rebuilt. W. Walter stated that we are repairing the tennis courts, not re-building. Glenn Nicol's asked if the Town ever considered using hydro from the runoff of the dam on Columbia Lake. M. Walter explained that the challenge we have is the lake was designed to hold water and that when the lake gets low the water stops flowing over the dam. This makes the option of using hydro unfeasible due to the possibility of water not flowing 12 months a year.
13. **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:** L. Napolitano asked if we should look into getting a Forester to give us an assessment on our trees. S. Everett asked L. Napolitano to look into this and report back.
14. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: Real estate per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(D); Pending Litigation per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B); Personnel per State Statues Section 1-200(6)(A).**S. Everett MOVED to enter into Executive Session at 7:49 pm to discuss Real Estate with M. Walter, Town Administrator; J. LaVoie, Executive Administrative Assistant; Glenn Nichols Sr., and Glenn Nichols Jr. present. MOTION CARRIED 5.0. S. Everett MOVED to end the Executive Session at 8:02 pm and enter back into public session.
- 14.1 S. Everett MOVED to Authorize our Land Use Department in conjunction with the Town's legal counsel to start the appropriate procedures necessary to allow the purchase of a Town-owned strip of land (approx. 50' x 200') at the end of Tunxis Dr. cul-de-sac to Glen Nichols, Jr. MOTION CARRIED 5.0.
15. **ADJOURNMENT:** S. Everett MOVED to ADJOURN at 8:04 pm. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. The next meeting of the BOS is scheduled for Tuesday, May 21, 2019 at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer C. LaVoie

Town of Columbia

MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE

“Let no vandalism of avarice or neglect, no ravages of time testify to the present or to the coming generations that we have forgotten as a people the cost of a free and undivided republic.”

-- General Logan, 1868 Founder of Memorial Day



Monday, May 27, 2019 at 9:00 am

Yeomans Hall

PROGRAM

(Ceremony will start in Yeomans Hall)

Welcome	Steven M. Everett First Selectman
National Anthem	Melissa Rood
Dedication of POW/MIA Flagpole	Steven M. Everett
Invocation	Pastor Betsey Polglase Congregational Church
Moment of Silence to Honor The Fallen	Steven M. Everett
Reflections of Memorial Day	John Pires Lieutenant Colonel, US Army Ret.
Placement of Wreath	Columbia Scouts BSA
Raising & lowering of the Flag to half-staff	Veterans
Sounding of TAPS	

PROGRAM

**Proceed on foot to Revolutionary War Cemetery
("Old Yard") adjacent to St. Columba Church**

Moment of Silence & Sounding of TAPS

Proceed on foot to Center Cemetery

Moment of Silence & Sounding of TAPS

Flag lowered to half-staff Columbia Scouts BSA Flag Detail

**Motorcade procession to West Street Center
Cemetery**

Moment of Silence & Sounding of TAPS

Flag lowered to half-staff Columbia Scouts BSA Flag Detail



TOWN OF COLUMBIA

323 Jonathan Trumbull Highway, Columbia, CT 06237
(860) 228-0440 FAX: (860) 228-2847

Building & Land Use Department

TO: Columbia Board of Selectmen
FROM: Paula Stahl, Town Planner
DATE: May 16, 2019
RE: Zoning Fee Ordinance

At the March 19th Board of Selectman's Public Hearing, two members of the PZC asked that the proposal be referred back to them for reconsideration. The Public Hearing was continued to June 4th. After the Public Hearing, the PZC has had an opportunity to reconsider their previous recommendation and on May 13th unanimously approved the following motion.

R. Nassiff **MOVED** to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that the fees on page one of the Draft Fee Ordinance reflect no increase, and the other fees of the proposal be approved as previously submitted. E.J. Starkel **SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.**

Below is the updated recommendation (in blue) from the PZC for page 1 of the proposed Fee Ordinance; they recommend no change to the other proposed fees. (Minutes attached)

Zoning Permit / Certificate of Zoning Compliance

New Primary Building (up to 4 inspections):	\$100 <i>[no change]</i>
Re-inspections:	\$25 each before Zoning Certificate <i>[no change]</i>
New or addition to accessory/secondary building or addition to primary building: (i.e. barn, garage, in-ground pool, deck)	\$50 \$25 - no change <i>[currently \$25]</i>
Minor accessory structure: (i.e. storage shed, solar panels)	\$25 \$10 - no change <i>[currently \$10]</i>
Temporary Certificate of Zoning Compliance	\$100 <i>[no change]</i>
Interior Renovations:	\$25 \$10 - no change <i>[currently \$10]</i>
Home Occupation	\$25 <i>[no change]</i>
Release letter from Land Records	\$100 <i>[no change]</i>
Sign permit	\$25 per application to ZEO <i>[no change]</i>
Other matters requiring staff review -with no zoning permit required:	\$25 [new fee] - no new fee

TOWN OF COLUMBIA
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room
323 Route 87, Columbia, CT
Monday, May 13, 2019 7:00 pm
Regular Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Chairman Rick Nassiff, Vice Chair Vera Englert, Don Schofield, Thomas Currier, Richard Napolitano, E.J. Starkel, Larry Preston (Alternate)

Members Excused: Robert Powell, Walt Tabor (Alternate)

Staff Present: Town Planner Paula Stahl

Others Present: None

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** R. Nassiff called the meeting to order at 7:02pm after a moment of silence for the passing of Cindee Hodge.
2. **ROLL CALL AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES:** L. Preston was **SEATED** for R. Powell
3. **ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO AGENDA:** None
4. **APPROVAL OF PZC REGULAR MEETING MINUTES of April 22, 2019.** EJ Starkel **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the 04/22/2019 meeting minutes as presented; D. Schofield **SECONDED**; **MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0**
5. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** None
6. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS (Discussion/Possible Action)**
 - 6.1. Reconsideration of Fee Schedule.

P. Stahl shared page one with the fees changed to reflect no increase to the fees as the PZC had discussed at the April meeting. Members discussed the PZC fees shown on page two, and felt they were reasonable, and noted that the fees would only partially cover the time needed by all the land use staff to review a project. They discussed the escrow provisions for fees to review proposed roads, for road construction supervision and for legal costs, and felt they were reasonable. R. Nassiff noted that the fees listed on page one are those used every day by town residents when they add a deck, or put up a shed. By not increasing those fees, it sends a message to town residents that the town works to keep costs down.

R. Nassiff **MOVED** to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that the fees on page one of the Draft Fee Ordinance reflect no increase, and the other fees of the proposal be approved as previously submitted. E.J. Starkel **SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.**
7. **NEW BUSINESS:** None
8. **REGULATION REVISIONS**
 - 8.1. Revised Draft Commercial Zoning Regulations.

P. Stahl shared the revised draft zoning map. R. Nassiff felt that at the next meeting a public hearing date could be set.
9. **COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS:** None
10. **COMMISSION OPEN DISCUSSION:** None
11. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:** None
12. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Pending Litigation per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B): None
13. **ADJOURNMENT:** R. Nassiff **MOVED** to **ADJOURN**; EJ Starkel **SECONDED**; **MOTION CARRIED 7:0:0.**

The meeting was **ADJOURNED** at 7:36pm

Respectfully submitted by Paula Stahl, Town Planner

Please see the minutes of subsequent meetings for approval of these minutes and any corrections hereto.

Services Summary



Municipal Services

- Human Resources
- IT Services
- Energy Consortia
- Natural Gas
- ezIQC
- Crumbling Foundations
- Election Monitoring
- Committees/Councils



Policy Development & Planning

- Brownfields
- Natural Hazard Mitigation
- Sustainability
- Complete Streets
- Development
- Regional GIS
- Publications and Studies
- Committees



Public Safety & Homeland Security

- Emergency Support Functions
- Training and Exercises
- Committees
- Functional Needs Inclusive Planning E-Library



Transportation Planning

- Core Plans
- Multi-Modal Planning
- Operations & Management
- Funding Opportunities
- Performance Measures
- Performance Based Planning

Columbia to vote on budget plan

LISA MASSICOTTE
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

COLUMBIA — It's time for voters to decide Columbia's 2019-20 town/school budget package, one that isn't expected to increase taxes this year.

A voice vote is set to take place at the annual town meeting Tuesday at 7 p.m. in Yeomans Hall on Route 87.

The proposed total expenditures for the 2019-20 town/education budget is \$18,784,902, which is an increase of \$230,276, or 1.24 percent over the 2018-19 total budgeted expenditures.

"I think it's a fair budget. It meets the needs of the town and it uses revenues wisely," Columbia First Selectman Steven Everett said. "We put our self in a position to hopefully be able to handle whatever the state sends at us when they reach their budget."

The calculated mill rate for this spending package is 29.33, although subject to

change, this mill rate proposal is the same over the 2018-19 fiscal year.

Columbia Town Administrator Mark Walter said the budget process has not been controversial.

"We are looking forward to actually getting started accomplishing all the goals we've set for the town," he said. "Everyone involved worked really hard to make a conservative budget that includes all the essential requirements of a town."

For a home assessed at \$200,000, a property owner would be required to pay \$5,866 in taxes — the same as last year.

This spending package has multiple components, with the two biggest being municipal and education spending.

The town operating budget encompasses the board of selectmen budget, contingency and debt service.

It amounts to \$4,269,236, which is an increase of \$116,859, or 2.81 percent from the current budget.

The Columbia Board of Education budget is proposed at \$12,736,826, representing 69.87 percent of the town's total budget.

This is an increase of \$126,196, or 1 percent from the 2018-19 approved budget.

Columbia decided and was recommended to incorporate a \$39,708 appropriation toward a new teachers' retirement program.

Gov. Ned Lamont proposed a requirement that towns pay a portion of the state's teacher pensions.

It is not certain if this will be adopted by the General Assembly.

"I think we'd rather be safe than sorry," Everett said.

In addition, the town is spending \$1,159,094 in capital items — one-shot expenditures for items such as maintenance projects and new equipment — for the town and school.

Among the capital projects are Hop River Bridge

work, a box culvert for Hunt Road and a school security project.

Voters can also expect improvements for the recreation facility, according to Walter.

The Columbia Financial Planning and Allocation Commission moved to transfer \$15,000 out of the town's general fund into its capital fund for Rec Park.

This contributes to a \$115,000 appropriation toward recreation area improvements, also known as the rec park project.

This motion did not impact the town's proposed mill rate of 29.33, meaning taxes will likely stay the same.

"We just hope the public comes out and votes for the budget," Walter said.

Copies of budget proposal are available on the town's website, as well as in the Columbia Town Clerk's Office. Columbia's website is www.columbiact.org.

Follow Lisa Massicotte on Twitter - @LMassicotteTC.

UConn grads make it to finish line

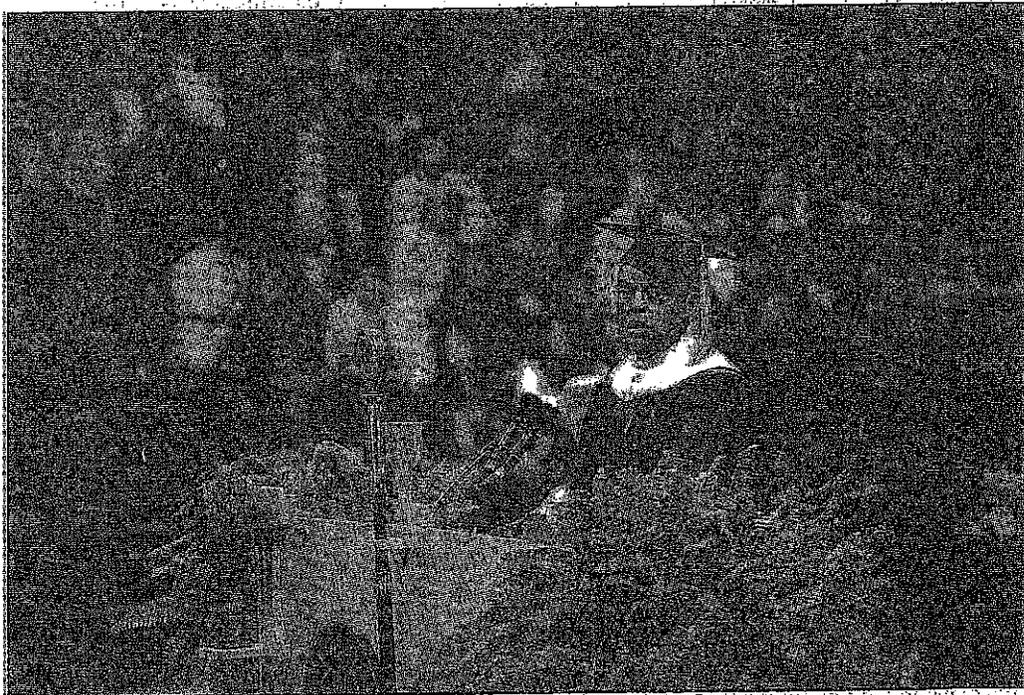
Continued from Page 1

According to the university, about 3,000 undergrads received diplomas between the two CLAS commencement ceremonies Sunday, with one held in the afternoon and one in the evening.

A total of 6,148 undergraduate students and 2,669 graduate students were expected to graduate in 15 total ceremonies, according to the university.

Most of those commencement took place over the weekend, with the last ceremony being May 19 at the UConn Law School in Hartford.

Wilson said, when he graduated from high school in 1953, he lacked confidence



Harvard University sociologist professor William Wilson gives the address during one

Facing a tight budget, the Board of Education has increased the tuition for district students Charles H. Barrows

will increase by 38 per student per

570 students

Approximately 570 students attend Barrows, with about a third, or 180, coming from surrounding towns.

attend Barrows, with about a third, or 180, coming from surrounding towns.

The board voted unanimously to make the change at its meeting last

week.

The Barrows Academy is a K-8 magnet school that is operated through the Windham Public Schools.

It accepts students from 26 sending districts, plus Windham students.

"If we lag in raising the tuition for the Barrows program, we will find ourselves eventually well below where it ought to be, and we will be subsidizing students coming to Barrows Academy from sending towns," school board Vice Chairman Murphy Sewall said. "We really need to keep up with the increasing costs."

Windham Superintendent of Schools Patricia Garcia said the increase will amount to about \$16,000 in revenue for the district.

The decision was also made because of budget constraints for the 2019-20 year.

The board of education is in the midst of sending its budget to voters for approval in early June.

At the end of April, the Windham Board of Finance cut the proposed

TUITION, Page 4

Columbia budget is easily approved



Columbia resident Paul Kudala writes his vote on a paper ballot during Columbia's town meeting Tuesday at Yeomans Hall. Lisa Massicotte/Staff

COLUMBIA	
YES	NO
34	1

LISA MASSICOTTE
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

COLUMBIA — Columbia's budget package for 2019-20, which comes without a tax increase, received voters' stamp of approval during Tuesday night's annual town budget meeting.

With 34 votes in favor, one opposed and one abstention, the total town/school budget of \$18,784,902 is now adopted for the upcoming fiscal year.

Votes were hand-cast by "yes/no" paper ballot during the meeting in Yeomans Hall.

Columbia Town Administrator Mark Walter expressed enthusiasm with the budget passage this morning.

"We are looking forward to achieving the goals of the town," he said.

COLUMBIA, Page 4

Inside

- Abby 6
- Classified 14
- Games 6
- Editorial 5
- Features 6, 8, 10, 16
- Horoscopes 6
- Local News 2, 3
- Nation/World 7
- Obituaries 4
- Public Notices 14
- Sports 10-14
- State 7
- Television 7
- Weather 2

Around town

Design your own pin 6:30 p.m. Thursday at the Guilford Smith Memorial Library in South Windham. See more calendar on Page 3.

Lotteries

TUESDAY	
Mid-Day 3	4-0-8
Mid-Day 4	8-3-4-0
Play 3	0-0-8
Play 4	7-8-4-4
Cash 5	1-12-14-19-27
Lotto	6-15-25-26-31-40
Mega Millions	11-59-66-67-68/18

2.79
2.79
2.88
2.89
2.89
2.89
2.90
uddy.com

Chronicle

ntic: CIT

hills east
ersection

exam

57 or
om



was an disorder in which there is an excess of fluid on the brain, Bragman said.

Burnett said in a statement Tuesday that she was heart-broken. "He was one in a million, not only as a brilliant comedian but as a loving human being. I cherish the times we had together both on the screen and off. He'll be in my heart forever."

Tributes also came from across the comedy world,

credited his Midwestern roots for putting him on the right path to laughs, with his deadpan expression and innocent, simple-minded demeanor.

"I think the Midwest is the heart of comedy in this country, and a little bit of the South, too," he told the Wisconsin State Journal in 2005. "For some reason, we're just more laid-back, more understanding. ... And Midwesterners have a kinder sense of humor."

Tuition to go up for out-of-town students

Continued from Page 1

increase for the 2019-20 school spending plan from 4.02 to 2.5 percent.

The board also claimed raising the rates would better align the district with other districts' tuition rates.

Garcia originally proposed a 1 percent increase, but board members felt 1 per-

cent, or \$49 a student, was too small an increase.

"At 1 percent, why bother?" board member Mark Doyle questioned. "Two percent makes more sense if just our salaries have gone up 3 percent"

Garcia said, because the board increased tuition last year by about 2 percent, the

1 percent raise this year was more fair.

However, she said she did not oppose the 2 percent increase.

Board member Tracy Lambert said the board should have made this decision earlier in the budget process.

"Have this conversation ahead of time so when other

towns are crickets, we're not unaware," Lambert said.

Garcia said she was not making the district's 15 percent deadline for a tuition rate increase at the school district meeting.

Follow Lisa Massicotte on Twitter - @LMassicotteTC

Columbia residents easily approve budget at town meeting

Continued from Page 1

The newly approved spending package is an increase of \$230,276, or 1.24 percent over the 2018-19 total budgeted expenditures.

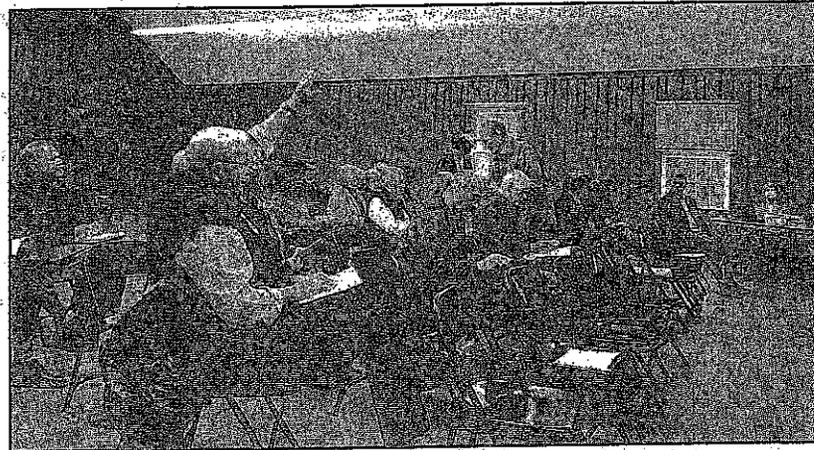
Immediately following the budget vote, the Columbia Financial Planning and Allocation Commission met to officially set the mill rate at 29.33, the same as this year.

"I think we've reached a reasonable compromise and the citizens appreciate that we were able to do the things we need to do without raising their taxes," FIPAC Chairman Earnest Sharpe said following the budget vote.

This tax rate is the same rate as initially proposed in the budget, meaning taxes will stay the same for taxpayers.

FIPAC was required to set the mill rate, despite fiscal uncertainty with the state's budget, due to time limitations per Columbia's town charter, according to Walter.

Under this mill rate, for a home assessed at \$200,000, a property



Columbia resident Robert Baldwin raises his hand to ask a question at Columbia's town meeting on the budget Tuesday night at Yeomans Hall. Lisa Massicotte | Staff

owner would be required to pay \$5,866 in taxes — the same as this fiscal year.

The general government operating budget, which includes the board of selectmen budget, contingency and debt service, amounts to \$4,269,236.

This is an increase of \$116,859, or 2.81 percent from the current

budget.

The town is also spending \$1,159,094 in capital items, expenditures for items such as maintenance projects and new equipment for both the town and school.

Among the capital projects are Hop River Bridge work, a box culvert for Hunt Road and a school security project.

Voters can also expect improvements for the recreation facility at Recreation Park from a \$115,000 appropriation, according to Walter.

The Columbia Board of Education budget is \$12,736,826, representing 69.87 percent of the town's total budget.

Acceptance of that spending plan had school officials pleased.

"I feel very positive about the budget that we created, that it meets the needs of our students and I feel that we are incredibly supported by the town and community as evidenced by such a quick adoption of the budget," Columbia Superintendent of Schools Maria Geryk said.

The school budget is a decrease of \$89,000, or 0.69 percent, less than what is being spent this school year, according to school officials.

"They're reducing that, anticipating that we're going to receive less Education Cost Sharing funding from the state," Geryk said.

There was little-to-no controversy or discussion during the budget

meeting.

Aside from resident Maria Geryk's request for a formal motion to amend the town's statutes, the only proposal was Columbia Board of Education Chairman Chris Lambert, who generated his support and urged those present to vote in favor.

"I'd like to recognize Superintendent Maria Geryk and her staff that worked together to create a budget that meets the needs of the school district," she said.

In addition, a town meeting was appropriated to fund a retirement program.

Gov. Ned Lamont's budget requires towns to contribute to the state's teacher pension fund.

It is not certain if the budget will be adopted by the General Assembly, but town officials are confident it will pass.

Follow Lisa Massicotte on Twitter - @LMassicotteTC

mmencement
an speeches,
listinguished

speakers, am-
scheduled for
exercises:
dius Wilson,
rofessor at
ersity, will
ive an hon-
luring both
ral Arts and
END, Page 4

the concert Aug. 17 at the Shaboo
Square on Jillson Square will be a "Shaboo
Salute to Woodstock," which occurred
50 years ago on that day.

Bruce John, a local musician and
one of the original Shaboo Inn owners,
said the concert will feature Canned
Heat (which performed at the 1969
Woodstock), NRBQ, David Foster &
The Shaboo All-Star Review and oth-
ers.

The event will benefit the Covenant
Soup Kitchen.

SHABOO STAGE, Page 4

Local musician Bruce John, of Mansfield, takes the Shaboo Stage as part
of the Shaboo All-Star Review last August. John is organizing a 'Shaboo
Salute to Woodstock' concert for this August at the venue. Chronicle file photo

*'The big names are all well and good, but turning that
energy into feeding our neighbors is the best thing,'
Bruce John said of a Woodstock tribute concert that will
benefit Willimantic's Covenant Soup Kitchen.*

Forum takes stance against legal pot

LISA MASSICOTTE
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

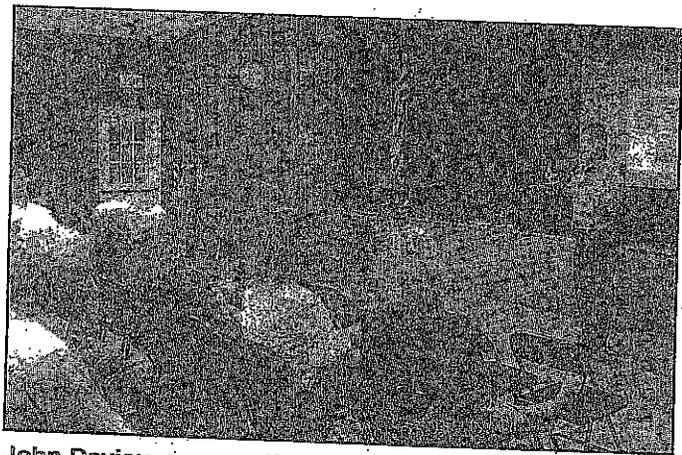
COLUMBIA — The
local youth services com-
mittee hosted an anti-can-
nabis legalization forum
Wednesday highlighting
potential impacts on minors
if cannabis is approved for
recreational use.

Known cannabis legaliza-
tion opponent, community
psychologist and drug pre-
vention advocate John Daviau
gave a presentation entitled
"Marijuana: Myths, Measures
and Misunderstandings" to
community members and
town officials.

He is the executive direc-
tor of the Connecticut
Association of Prevention
Professionals as well as head
of the Smart Approaches to
Marijuana group.

Daviau spoke of the so-
called "myths of inevitabil-
ity."

Those, he said, are "mari-
juana is harmless, tax rev-
enues from sales will be a



John Daviau, a preventionist, psychologist and known
cannabis opponent, speaks at an anti-pot legalization
forum in Columbia Wednesday. Lisa Massicotte / Staff

boon to the state and it will
save money on law enforce-
ment and incarceration."

Regarding the first myth,
Daviau said about 10,000
high school students in
Connecticut are addicted to
marijuana right now, as esti-
mated by the Connecticut
Association of Prevention
Professionals using data from
the U.S. census and youth
risk behavior survey.

"It does compromise brain
function and IQ in young
children," he said, adding it
also affects memory in older
children and adults.

But some Connecticut pro-
ponents believe issues involv-
ing other drug use, such as
alcohol, opioids and nicotine
should be more of a priority
to address.

"Comparatively, marijua-
na, while not good for the

brain development of minors,
is less concerning than the
attendance of keg parties
and nicotine use by minors
on college campuses and
beyond," said Connecticut
resident Bianca Beland.

One surprising argument
Daviau made is cannabis may
actually contribute to mental
illness.

"It's significantly linked
with certain mental illnesses,
especially schizophrenia and
psychosis, but also depres-
sion and anxiety," he said as
he referenced a 2015 study in
the 'Substance Abuse Journal'
and a 1987 study in the
Neurotoxicol Teratol.

But Republican Selectman
Lisa Napolitano voiced her
concerns that many illnesses
benefit from medicinal can-
nabis use and it can help stop
the opioid epidemic.

"I think the problem with
kids is they think it's just
about getting high, but it's
not. It's a drug that can help

COLUMBIA, Page 4

te
6
12
6
5
6, 14
6
2, 3
7-8
1
9-12
2
town
4:30
e Guilford
Library
See
Page 3
ies
DAY
9-8-2
9-10-5
1-0
2-6
7-33-35
66/3

Jennifer LaVoie

From: [REDACTED]
Content: Thursday, May 16, 2019 9:51 AM
To: Town Administrator
Cc: George Murphy; Brian Paul; Rec Director
Subject: Columbia Baseball Fields

Hi Mark,

I wanted to take a moment to tell you about the baseball/softball fields in town. I am the AD at Porter, and heavily involved with little league, so I have a very good working knowledge of our fields and those of our surrounding towns. As you may be aware, it has rained a little this spring. According to channel 3, this has been the second wettest spring since they began keeping record of such things. ALL of the towns around us have struggled to schedule games due to poor field conditions. George and Brian have been in constant contact letting us know the field status and have worked diligently to make them playable. In my opinion, Brian is just short of a magician. Without exception, every coach and umpire who comes to our big field comments on how nice it is. It is the best in the area because of the hard work our town guys put into it year after year. A huge thank you to your crew!

Best regards,
Steve Piro